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**From:** Brian Roberts  
**Sent:** Friday, March 31, 2017 10:49 AM  
**To:** Dawn Wallace (dwallace@az.gov)  
**Subject:** FW: Grand Canyon University

Dawn - passing along the latest update on our nursing program and the upcoming story that The Republic is planning to write. Thanks

**From:** Brian Mueller  
**Sent:** Friday, March 31, 2017 10:32 AM  
**To:** 'Nicole.carroll@arizonarepublic.com' <[Nicole.carroll@arizonarepublic.com](mailto:Nicole.carroll@arizonarepublic.com)>; 'mi-ai.parrish@republicmedia.com' <[mi-ai.parrish@republicmedia.com](mailto:mi-ai.parrish@republicmedia.com)>  
**Subject:** Grand Canyon University

I am writing to again request a meeting. I am available to meet any time today. I requested a meeting yesterday and Anne Ryman responded that you could meet at 2 pm. Unbeknownst to me, you were not going to be present at the meeting. Instead, Ms. Ryman and other members of your news team attended the meeting and continued to further their position that they are going to pursue the defamatory story that I outlined in my email to you yesterday.

I believe it is critical that we meet because if The Republic proceeds with the proposed disparaging story as your news team has indicated, a sensationalized and disingenuous story will unjustifiably be published that will result in significant damages to Grand Canyon University. Below are critical factors that we expressed yesterday to no avail with your news team:

- 8 nursing schools in Arizona, including Arizona State University, have received either a Decree of Censure or Probation from the Arizona State Board of Nursing (ASBN) in the last 2 years. Until now, The Republic has not previously reported on any of these 8 disciplinary notices. 5 of the 8 schools received more severe discipline than GCU yet, again, The Republic has not covered any of these instances. To our knowledge, The Republic has never published a story on a nursing college receiving a Decree of Censure.
- The facts at issue here were fully investigated by The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and both dismissed with no findings or concerns. The same facts were fully investigated by the ASBN and resulted in the issuance of ASBN's lowest form of discipline, a Decree of Censure, which the University has complied with fully from a disclosure standpoint and resulted in no fines, penalties, restrictions or conditions on the program.
- In the midst of the issuance of this Decree of Censure, with GCU's regulators being fully aware of all relevant facts, GCU was fully reaccredited, to the maximum extent, with no findings or compliance concerns, by both HLC and CCNE.
- GCU's FIRST-time pass rate on the NCLEX examination was 78.92% in 2015 (1.08% below the 80% minimum expectation of ASBN) and 72.89% in 2016, however, GCU's ultimate licensure for 2015 graduates was 95% and we are confident GCU's ultimate licensure for 2016 will be the same. We are also confident that GCU's first-time pass rate on the NCLEX examination will be above 80% in 2017 and will return to their historical marks of 90-plus percent by 2018. Even though the first-time pass rate has dipped, given the 95% ultimate licensure rate, students are clearly learning the skills necessary to become professional nurses. GCU has not raised its tuition in 8 years and, as a result, students are graduating with very little debt. In addition, 95% of GCU nursing students

ultimately obtained their license to practice, which is allowing them to obtain jobs and serve the needs of the healthcare community in the State of Arizona, which has a significant nursing shortage.

- Working closely together with the ASBN, GCU has been willing to scale its nursing program – at a significant financial loss – in order to address a significant Arizona and national nursing shortage and provide jobs for many Arizona students who want to fill these desperately needed positions. GCU loses \$1,329 per year on every pre-licensure nurse that it educates. Further, GCU has recently invested over \$14 million into very modern, state of the art classrooms and nursing simulation laboratories to support the GCU nursing program. It does not benefit GCU financially to grow its nursing program, yet the University has done so in order to meet a growing public need and to serve the thousands of students who desperately want to pursue a career in nursing.

A reasonable person, understanding the facts above, would conclude that the current situation does not demand a story, let alone a lengthy investigative report by the lead education reporter from The Republic. A reporter who, in spite of being the lead education reporter at The Republic, has failed to write any other stories about GCU over the course of the last three years since she previously wrote and published an extremely derogatory story about GCU alleging that the University lacks quality. If the currently proposed article is published, The Republic will be promoting a disingenuous story that, as a result of omitted facts and context, will misinform and confuse the public and unjustifiably damage GCU, its faculty and students.

Your news team acknowledged that we should have more aggressively pursued the concerns expressed yesterday about the last defamatory article written by Ms. Ryman in March 2014. Following their advice, we will not make that mistake again and are requesting to meet with you to ensure that an entirely avoidable situation is resolved in advance.

Respectfully,

Brian Mueller  
President

Grand Canyon University  
602-639-6212

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